designs were repeated in stucco on the ceiling. The walls were decorated with stucco bas-reliefs depicting Perseus and Andromeda [4], Diana and Acteon [5], Apollo and Daphne [6], Pan and Syrinx [7], and Diana and Callisto [8]. This remarkable decorative scheme served to set off the famous statues now in the Capitoline Museum: the Amazon, Lucretia of Rome, Minerva, and the Diana with her bow and faithful dog which gave the grotto its name.

Above the Grotto of Diana was another open-air dining space with four niches for statues symbolizing the Four Seasons sculpted out of peperino. On either side of the entrance, by the terrace, were the antique statues of Bacchus and Mars now in the Ince Blundell Hall Collection in England. Opposite this « dining hall » is the fountain named for Thetis, the mother of Achilles. Lastly, at the center, beneath the loggia, is the Fountain of Leda which contained three niches with antique statues: the Leda and the Swan now in the Borghese Museum and Helen and Clytemnestra. In front of the loggia is the Fountain of the Seahorses, consisting of an antique tripod with three seahorses (no longer extant) which came from Hadrian's Villa.

To complete the west side of the villa a court for ball games had been marked out on one side, while on the other was a secret garden where the statue of Venus, now in the courtyard, once stood.

[4] Andromeda, the beautiful daughter of Cepheus, king of Ethiopia, was to be sacrificed to a sea monster, but was saved by Perseus. Perseus riding his winged horse Pegasus, slew the monster and freed Andromeda who he then wed (Ovid, Metamorphoses, IV, v. 683).

[5] Acteon was a skilled hunter who was turned into a deer by Diana and torn to pieces by her dogs because he had caught a glimpse of her bathing in the Parthenia fountain (Ovid, Metamorphoses, III, v. 138).

[6] The nymph Daphne, pursued by Apollo who loved her with unrequited love, prayed to be turned into a laurel plant to escape him. Her wish was fulfilled and laurel became the plant Apollo held sacred (Ovid, Metamorphoses, I, v. 452).

[7] Pan was a god of nature and forests, half man and half goat, who protected shepherds and hunters. He fell in love with Syrinx, a nymph from Arcadia, who did not return his love. Pan pursued her until she invoked her father Ladon to turn her into a reed. Her father granted her wish whereupon Pan cut the reed and made it into the instrument he called a « syrinx » (Ovid, Metamorphoses, I, v. 680).

By the time Cardinal Ippolito met his death on December 2, 1572 [13], the general layout of the gardens had already been completed, even though only a few of the fountains were at the time finished. The completion of the architecture was left to his successors who, aside from a few slight modifications, faithfully carried out the original plans.

Cardinal Ippolito had willed the villa to cardinals of the House of d'Este and, should there be no heirs, to the deacon of the College of Cardinals. Cardinal Luigi d'Este (1538-1586) spent some time in Tivoli and when he died the villa passed into the hands of Deacon Alessandro Farnese. Work was again undertaken in 1605 when Cardinal Alessandro d'Este was appointed Governor of Italy. In 1621 he managed to have the will changed so that the villa became the exclusive property of the d'Este family. Other work was carried out during the time of Cardinal Rinaldo I d'Este (1633-1672). Bernini was commissioned first with the Fountain of the Bicchierone (« Big Goblet ») and then in 1611 with the cascade of the Organ Fountain. Later other projects were entrusted to a pupil of Bernini's, the architect Mattia de' Rossi, who in 1671 carried out several alterations to the palace and enriched the water show of the Fountain of Rome and the Fountain of the Dragons.

Villa d'Este was celebrated before it was even finished. We have proof in the frescoes of Caprarola and Bagnaia and in an engraving by Dupérac dedicated to Caterina de' Medici. The engraving was taken from a drawing commissioned by Maximilian of Austria who deemed the villa of such perfection that it could withstand comparison against any other in existence.

[12] Callisto was a nymph and one of Diana's hunting companions. She had a child Arcas, the father of whom was Jupiter. Having failed to keep her vow of chastity she was cast off by Diana. Later she was turned into a bear by Juno and afterwards into a constellation by Jupiter (Ovid, Metamorphoses, II, v. 409).

[13] Ippolito II died in Rome on December 2, 1572 in the palace of Monte Giordano after a brief illness. The funeral rite was solemnly celebrated in the church of Santa Maria in Aquiro of which he had been the titular cardinal. Marc-Antoine Muret delivered the funeral oration in his polished Latin. The Cardinal's remains were laid to rest in the church of San Francesco in Tivoli on December 8, 1572.